



# TOM TIFFANY

STATE SENATOR • 12TH SENATE DISTRICT

## **Testimony on Senate Bill 719 Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining, & Forestry February 25, 2020**

Thank you members of the Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining, & Forestry for hearing my testimony on Senate Bill 719 (SB 719) related to the use of wood to contain bear bait in stumps. I would also like to thank Representative Stafsholt for his hard work on this legislation.

Under current law, it is illegal for any person to place, use, or hunt over bait placed for bears that is not enclosed in a hollow log, a hole in the ground, or a stump which is capped with logs, rocks or other naturally occurring and unprocessed substances. The purpose for the requirement to cover the bait is to prevent whitetail deer, wolves, and rodents from accessing the material inside. It also contains the bait material prior to, and after, the arrival of a bear.

However, being that the stumps used often have no bottoms, animals that are not the intended species are able to dig under and/or tip the stump over and access the material contained inside from underneath. This often ends up with the bait being spread across the ground. The law says that the hunter must contain bait back inside the stump, and it can be problematic to get the hollow stump back over all the bait. This makes it difficult for sportsmen with the best of intentions to be able to fully adhere to the letter of the law.

Though the reason for not allowing glass, plastic, metal, or processed wood has served its purpose to keep our beautiful forests natural. However, as the sport of bear hunting continually tries to advance best use practices, we feel that allowing sportsmen to use materials such as plywood for bottoms of these hollow stumps will be a better practice and be more appealing to all user groups.

Making this change would allow hunters to more easily maintain a legal bait site and help decrease the likelihood of the site becoming a congregation site for non-target animals.

In the Assembly, Rep. Stafsholt added an amendment at the request of the DNR to clarify wood could not be used within the bait. I have introduced an identical amendment. The Assembly companion passed, as amended, on a voice vote.

Again, thank you members of the Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining, & Forestry for hearing my testimony on Senate Bill 719. I would appreciate your support.

Thank you.